

3.0 Government Organization

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3.0 Government Organization

Introduction

A high quality of life is the goal of every community. The citizens of the community decide upon the type of environment in which they want to live and work.

In alleviating community problems, the role of the government is influential and vital. Government must be fully united within the community rather than thought of as a separate, unrelated organization. Improved awareness and communications can help bring about this unity. Citizen involvement is an internal part of an effective and responsive governmental system. To ensure that this challenge is met some communities may choose to form a task force to do this assessment.

Purpose and Organization of Task Force

The purpose of the task force for Government Organization is to address issues involved in assessing the local government organization, developing a vehicle of communication for citizen input and assessing the community against the minimum criteria presented in the MoCAP program.

The government organization task force should assume responsibility for becoming as knowledgeable as possible in this program area. The task force chairman delegates responsibility to selected task force members for assessment and project implementation in sub-areas, provides direction and overall coordination of members' efforts, and insures that the task force' findings and activities are reported back to the community betterment committee. Task force members are responsible for the analysis of needs and goal-setting, assessment and project implementation in assigned sub-areas.

Recommended Members

It is suggested that you try to include as many diverse people as possible within the task force. Please understand that you may wish to invite others whose field of endeavor is not specifically mentioned. Do not hesitate to invite all interested citizens who may not normally be connected with the "governmental" process.

The task force should have representation of interested citizens and civic clubs (i.e., League of Women Voters) and definitely include city officials (i.e., mayor or city council persons).

Resources

Resources that can be utilized by this task force in assistance for gathering documentation, project implementation, objective viewpoints and advice are: city government, which includes, mayor, public works director, city clerk, planning and zoning commission, city council persons and city manager; county government; Missouri Municipal League; Missouri Association of Counties; regional planning commission or council of government; and Missouri Department of Economic Development.

Timing

There is no standard time frame recommended for completing government organization task force activities. For the task force to inventory existing conditions and services, identify

service gaps and duplication, determine needed services or activities; set priorities and undertake action will require significant time and effort. However, through an organized and systematic effort, the task force can insure the ultimate action recommended and undertaken will be most appropriate.

A specific timetable should be established and maintained. Whether or not the timetable is met will largely depend upon such factors as the number of persons involved, their level of experience, degree of commitment, leadership qualities, size of community, frequency of meetings and the extent to which cooperation from outside sources may be required.

3.1 Community Planning

Introduction

Long-range, comprehensive planning is an integral part of any community's growth and development. A major reason for many of our urban problems today is that no plans for growth existed in past years. A comprehensive plan must include all facets of the physical development of the community. The plan must be flexible, continually updated to avoid obsolescence and provide for the needs of the future.

If this program already exists in this community, then the responsibility for the assessment and evaluation of this sub-category is primarily that of the people who administer it. If the program does not exist in the community and the community wants to establish it, then a committee or task force can be setup to determine what needs to be done using the program process described below.

All Missouri Certified City (AMCC) Status

Communities pursuing the AMCC status must:

- 1) Complete the program process and meet the standards of this sub-category, set goals and establish a plan to achieve the goals.
- 2) Furnish to the Department of Economic Development (DED) a narrative line item report describing the program process used, how they measure up to each of the program standards, the goals set, and plans to achieve the goals. Other documentation such as maps, brochures, ordinances, minutes, contracts, news releases, etc., should NOT accompany the report, but should be kept on file in your office.
- 3) DED must approve your report in order to be certified. Certification will remain in effect for three years. To be re-certified the same process must be followed and a new report furnished.

STAR City Status

Communities pursuing the Star City Status must follow the same procedure and furnish the same kind of report as those pursuing the AMCC Status. The difference between the two is that the Star City Communities do not have to meet all of the program standards, nor do they necessarily have to have every sub-category program existing in their community. The Star City Status remains in effect for three years. For re-designation the same procedure must be followed as for the original designation and a new report must be furnished to DED.

Program Process

The process for assessment can be as simple as the people in charge of the program (e.g. Board of directors, executive director, managers, staff, committee, and others) evaluating the community's program against the program standards in this sub-category. Or the process can

be amplified by forming a task force to assess and evaluate your program more in depth using various techniques such as surveys, town meetings, consulting with outside experts, etc. Whatever the process used it is important to determine if the program is meeting the needs of the community and how it will meet future needs.

For the report, please describe the process you used to assess and evaluate your program.

Program Standards

These standards are designed to assist those communities starting a program in this sub-category, and for those communities that wish to measure their existing program against these standards. These standards are set by consensus of experts which include community citizenry, university professors, state and federal specialists and other professionals within the field.

Due to the uniqueness of each community, certain standards may not be important or even necessary within a community. For example, the size of a community will determine a great deal whether or not the standards within a particular sub-category need to be adopted in their entirety or even at all. This program is designed to suggest these standards and then allow a community to decide if they wish to adopt any or all of them. However, those communities endeavoring to achieve AMCC status must meet the requirements in this sub-category.

Standards For: Community Planning

A. Organization

Identify or create an organization or other entity responsible for the development, administration and operation of this program in your community.

B. Mission statement

Formulate, put in writing, keep on file and review the mission statement for this program. The mission statement should simply state the purpose of the program. It should be easily understood so that the elements of the program, as well as its implementation, even day to day activities, can readily be measured against it.

C. Active planning commission

The community should have an active planning commission as outlined in Chapter 89 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. Regular meetings should be scheduled and held.

D. Comprehensive plan reviewed and updated each year

An up-to-date plan should be developed which includes the following areas:

1. Land use plan – indicating uses for residential, commercial, industrial lands, with location and extent of lands needed for public uses.
2. Transportation plan.
3. Community facilities plan – general plans and advance purchasing of sites for community facilities such as buildings, schools, fire halls and an analysis of present facilities to see which should be retained.
4. Public improvements plan – a priority listing of needed public works for the next five years.
5. Accommodation plan for disabled and handicapped – a listing of public facilities and programs which needs to be made accessible to the disabled and handicapped.
6. Layout for the redevelopment and/or restoration of blighted districts and distressed areas.

E. Planning implementation tools

The community should adopt and implement ordinances or update and enforce existing ordinances in the following areas:

1. Subdivision regulations (adopt and enforce) -- All sub-divisions or resubdivisions of land should be approved only when acceptable standards of space and design are achieved and when a full measure of physical improvements is installed or bond is posted for such installation.
2. Zoning ordinances (adopt and enforce) – A comprehensive plan for zoning should be enacted and enforced, providing for all appropriate uses of land, based on future needs of the community, including possible land annexation.
3. Housing codes (adopt and enforce) – City should have an ordinance setting minimum standards for housing. The zoning officer, building inspector or some other city official could assume enforcement duties in this area.

4. Building codes (adopt and enforce) – These can be a standard format (with minor modifications) of the National Board of Fire Underwriters, Building Officials of America, Regional Codes; or codes can be drafted locally and should include provisions for the repair or removal of unsafe structures. Codes should include sections covering the installation and maintenance of electricity, gas and plumbing. Building inspector should be responsible for compliance with all codes and all should be enforced.
- F. Develop a citizen participation program to insure involvement in the planning process**
Opportunities to involve citizens in the planning process should be established. Examples might include: advisory committee, task forces, public hearing, citizen surveys and public information (brochure, media, etc.) to make citizens aware of their opportunities for and secure their active participation.

Program Goals and Planning

From the assessment and evaluation of this program you should determine if the program is meeting the needs and wants of the community. The process of this assessment and its resulting findings should be taken to the next steps of goal setting and planning.

Questions to ask concerning this sub-category: How do the goals of the program of this sub-category fall in line with the vision and the overall goals of the community; What are the plans to achieve those goals.

- 1) **Please describe the goals you have set for this program.**
- 2) **Please describe in some detail the plans (how, when, who, etc.) for achieving the goals set for this program.**

3.2 Budget/Fiscal Control System

Introduction

Adequate financial resources are essential for the government to operate in a meaningful way. A sound fiscal control system is a necessity for the proper management of the resources if the local government is to function efficiently. All communities should have a good financial program and systematic management methods and practices.

If this program already exists in this community, then the responsibility for the assessment and evaluation of this sub-category is primarily that of the people who administer it. If the program does not exist in the community and the community wants to establish it, then a committee or task force can be setup to determine what needs to be done using the program process described below.

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- 3) DED must approve your report in order to be certified. Certification will remain in effect for three years. To be re-certified the same process must be followed and a new report furnished.

Program Process

The process for assessment can be as simple as the people in charge of the program (e.g. Board of directors, executive director, managers, staff, committee, and others) evaluating the community's program against the program standards in this sub-category. Or the process can be amplified by forming a task force to assess and evaluate your program more in depth using various techniques such as surveys, town meetings, consulting with outside experts, etc. Whatever the process used it is important to determine if the program is meeting the needs of the community and how it will meet future needs.

For the report, please describe the process you used to assess and evaluate your program.

Program Standards

These standards are designed to assist those communities starting a program in this sub-category, and for those communities that wish to measure their existing program against these standards. These standards are set by consensus of experts which include community citizenry, university professors, state and federal specialists and other professionals within the field.

Due to the uniqueness of each community, certain standards may not be important or even necessary within a community. For example, the size of a community will determine a great deal whether or not the standards within a particular sub-category need to be adopted in their entirety or even at all. This program is designed to suggest these standards and then allow a community to decide if they wish to adopt any or all of them. However, those communities endeavoring to achieve AMCC status must meet the requirements in this sub-category.

Standards For: Budget/Fiscal Control System

A. Organization

Identify or create an organization or other entity responsible for the development, administration and operation of this program in your community.

B. Mission statement

Formulate, put in writing, keep on file and review the mission statement for this program. The mission statement should simply state the purpose of the program. It should be easily understood so that the elements of the program as well as its implementation, even day to day activities, can readily be measured against it.

C. Annual budget

The community should adopt an annual comprehensive budget covering all operations. The city should adhere to the budget except when amendment is necessary to meet unexpected circumstances. The budget should be prepared far enough in advance of the fiscal year to permit public hearings, deliberations and final adoption before the fiscal year begins. Initial budget preparation should be the responsibility of the finance director.

D. Annual and five-year capital improvement budget

The city should adopt a long-range budget or plan of capital improvements. Major capital improvements. Major capital improvements should be planned ahead for at least five years. Annual revisions should be made to keep the plans up-to-date. Expenditure provisions in the city's annual budget should be adequate to properly implement this long-range planning.

E. Public financial statement

Annual reports in readily understandable form on municipal operations, including financial statements, should be published and distributed to the citizens of the city, either through the news media or in a specifically-prepared publication to insure public accountability.

F. Annual audit by CPA

Accounting records should be audited annually by a certified public accountant, preferably experienced in governmental accounting.

G. Establish a full-time finance director position to monitor the fiscal system.

Program Goals and Planning

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1.3 City Personnel System

Introduction

All communities require effective and efficiently-managed governments. This purpose can be achieved in large part by maintaining a high caliber of personnel and staff services. The city government must strive to achieve this level of quality in its personnel system to provide a government which is sensitive to the public will and conducive to the continued development of the community.

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Program Process

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Standards For: City Personnel System

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C. City staff training program

An ongoing, in-service training program should be established for city personnel in their various departments. The city should develop means of evaluating needs and deficiencies of present training, establish a program to alleviate deficiencies and provide a training program as an element of stated policy. Training should include provisions for attendance at seminars, short courses, professional meetings and correspondence courses.

D. Membership in LAGERS or a comparable retirement system

E. Personnel policies for employees

Personnel policies for city employees should be recorded and distributed to employees in the form of a policy manual. The manual should encompass position classifications, salary and wage ranges (compensation), recruitment and selection standards (appointment), in service training, employee evaluation, disciplinary rules and regulations, grievance procedures, substance abuse procedures, employee safety, fringe and retirement benefits and reports and records of officers.

F. Plan for disabled

All Missouri cities must have a plan to provide reasonable accommodations for the disabled according to state statutes. This deals with access, as well as employment practices.

G. EEO and Affirmative Action Plan

City employees should be covered by the merit principle in all applicable departments. The city should have a written affirmative action program. Many grant programs demand an EEO and affirmative action plan for eligibility.

H. City administrator/manager/executive

Municipal affairs should be directed by a qualified, full-time chief executive who may be a mayor, city manager, public works director, city clerk or city administrator who is responsible for execution of the municipal government's decisions and general administration.

Program Goals and Planning

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3.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation

Introduction

The community must work toward increased cooperation and coordination of all levels of government – among local governments and between local, regional, state and federal programs. Active participation in area wide or statewide organizations can facilitate this cooperation.

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C. Community should join and participate in a regional or state organization that promotes better government (such as councils of government, regional planning commissions, Missouri Municipal League, etc.

D. Joint service contracts and agreements with other cities or counties to more efficiently provide services as applicable.

The joint service agreement may produce intrajurisdictional cooperation in the following (partial list) areas:

1. Land use
2. Transportation
3. Conservation (open space)
4. Water management
5. Solid waste management
6. Flood control
7. Regional housing
8. Ordinances
9. Codes

Program Goals and Planning

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3.5 Government Communication

Introduction

The continuation of progress necessitates the fullest possible integration of the government and the community population. It is vital that the citizen be aware of and understand government functions to enable their participation in the democratic process and allow them to take advantage of the services which it provides. Government officials similarly must be aware of the needs of the community and be willing to adjust the operations of government to those needs.

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C. Codification of ordinances

The community should develop and maintain an updated system of codified ordinances. The ordinances should be readily available for use by citizens. Someone should be designated to answer questions concerning the ordinances. Communities should strive for uniformity of ordinances, so as to lessen confusion among citizens who must abide by them.

D. Annual report of activities

An annual report should be published and made available to the community.

E. Citizen action center or system

Provisions should be made to facilitate citizen awareness, understanding and participation. A citizen action center would ideally serve this purpose. The center could handle requests for assistance in solving problems of various government departments. If it is not feasible to establish a center, then these responsibilities must be shouldered by other branches of city government.

F. Public meetings/hearings

The community should provide the opportunity for public access to decision-makers before decisions are made. Public access should include: the establishment of procedures for citizen input; provisions for the notification of hearings on policy decisions and changes; and reasonable assurance that the findings would be implemented.

G. Citizen newsletter

Establish a citizen newsletter to provide information on government activities and notification of future meetings/hearings. The newsletter should be available at the citizen action center and mailed to homes and/or businesses. If it is not feasible to establish a regular newsletter, then some other means should be found to keep the public informed.

H. New releases

The community should encourage media coverage of governmental activities to promote awareness and participation.

Program Goals and Planning

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